

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security

BILL: SB 346

INTRODUCER: Senators Ingoglia and Yarborough

SUBJECT: Special Observances

DATE: January 8, 2024

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Brown	Proctor	MS	Pre-meeting
2.			CA	
3.			RC	

I. Summary:

SB 346 designates the month of November each year as Veteran Appreciation Month. The Governor may annually issue a proclamation designating Veterans Appreciation Month and encourage counties, municipalities, public schools, and state residents to observe the occasion through providing special programs and events to honor veterans.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.

II. Present Situation:

Legal Holidays and Observances

Examples of legal holidays are New Year’s Day (January 1), Memorial Day (the last Monday in May), Independence Day (July 4), Labor Day (the first Monday in September), Thanksgiving Day (the fourth Thursday in November), and Christmas Day (December 25).¹

In addition to legal holidays, special observances are recognized and observed by the state. Special observance days include Law Enforcement Memorial Day², Arbor Day³, and Law Day and Law Week⁴.

¹ Section 683.01, F.S.

² Section 683.115, F.S.

³ Section 683.04, F.S.

⁴ Section 683.22, F.S.

Veterans Recognition Days

The legal holiday of Veterans' Day is annually celebrated November 11.⁵ In addition to the one-day holiday, the 2023 Legislature enacted as a special observance a Veterans Week.⁶ Veterans Week begins with the Sunday preceding November 11 of each year. If November 11 is on a Sunday, Veterans Week begins that day. If the Governor proclaims a Veterans Week, public officials, schools, private organizations, and state residents are called upon to mark the observance by honoring veterans who answered the call in war and peace.⁷

Veterans in Florida

Population

Ranked lower than only California and Texas for number of veteran residents, Florida has the third largest population of veterans in the nation.⁸ In excess of 1.4 million veterans reside in Florida. The number of veterans in Florida represents 12 percent of the state's population of persons who are at least 18 years old.⁹

Medal of Honor Recipients

The highest military decoration awarded by the U.S. government, the Medal of Honor is bestowed by the President on behalf of Congress.¹⁰ The Medal of Honor is conferred only upon members of the U.S. Armed Forces who distinguish themselves through "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his or her life above and beyond the call of duty."¹¹

According to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, 24 Medal of Honor recipients have been accredited to Florida.¹²

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 346 creates s. 683.336, F.S., to designate the month of November each year as Veteran Appreciation Month. The Governor may annually issue a proclamation designating Veterans Appreciation Month and encourage counties, municipalities, public schools, and state residents are encouraged to observe the occasion through providing special programs and events to honor veterans.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.

⁵ Section 683.01(1)(q), F.S.

⁶ Section 683.1474, F.S.; s 4, ch. 2023-162, Laws of Fla.

⁷ Section 683.1475(2), F.S.

⁸ Florida Dep't of Veterans Affairs, *FDVA - Our Veterans*, available at <https://www.floridavets.org/our-veterans/> (last visited Dec. 13, 2023).

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ U.S. Dep't of Defense, *Honors for Valor*, available at <https://www.defense.gov/Multimedia/Experience/honors-for-valor/> (last visited Dec. 13, 2023).

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² Congressional Medal of Honor Society, *The Recipients*, available at <https://www.cmoHS.org/recipients/overview> (last visited Dec. 13, 2023).

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None identified.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

As local entities are encouraged but not required to celebrate Veteran Appreciation Month with activities and events, a fiscal impact is not expected.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

This bill creates a new section of law, s. 683.336, F.S. In 2023, the Legislature enacted Veterans Week in s. 683.1475, F.S. Given the overlap between Veterans Week and Veterans Appreciation Month, the sponsor may wish to consider instead amending s. 683.1475, F.S., replacing Veterans Week with Veteran Appreciation Month.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates section 683.336 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
